

Dream brings Rogers family up to an even dozen

During the past 16 years, more than 50 children have walked through the front door of Larry and Cecelia Rogers' home. Fostering was a lifelong dream for Cecelia, who always wanted a large family. She knew at an early age that she wanted birth children but also wanted to adopt. She married Larry, a military man and they were stationed outside the U.S. Although the family was started, any plans for adoption were put on hold until their return to the states.

Upon their return, the Rogers had decided they wanted to adopt a sibling group of little girls who would complement their family. That plan was "slightly" altered with seven boys in a row being placed in their home. Cecelia has fulfilled her lifelong dream of a BIG family. The family is currently an even dozen with mom, dad and ten kids. The Rogers have three birth children and seven adopted children. Their first six adoptions were boys and number seven was that little girl.



*Larry and Cecelia Rogers with
Jurgen (15) and Skylar (4)*

Because of their experience, other foster and adoptive parents often call the Rogers for support and guidance. They are eager to share any nuggets of wisdom.

"Foster parents need a high level of training and a high level of commitment. You also have to have a caseworker who you can call and count on," says Cecelia.

Children of all ages have been placed with the Rogers, but their preference is teens. They find them easier to reason with. According to Cecelia, many have given up their unrealistic fantasies so they're easier to handle.

The Rogers are willing to give any child a chance and have tackled many challenging behaviors. Caseworker Carolyn Nelson had nothing but praise for the Rogers.

"They always go the extra mile. They are devoted parents, willing to hang in there when times are tough," she said.

As members of the Belleville Foster Parent Association they can reach out to other foster/adoptive parents for information and problem solving. The congregation of the First Assembly of God Church has also offered spiritual support, along with childcare. Both the Foster Parent Association and the church have been instrumental in maintaining successful placements.

Rogers (con't.)

Any child placed with the Rogers family will have a strong advocate for services. Their philosophy is that any child should have all the services they need to allow them to have the best life they can. Open communication with the caseworkers, helps to ensure that the children have the needed services. When faced with serious problems such as attachment, the family has relied on experts in the field to guide them. They have attended trainings and read books on common issues that foster/adoptive children face.

After sixteen years of service with the Dept. of Children and Family Services, their door remains wide open. They are motivated by an inner strength and desire to keep helping.

OUR KIDS

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Call with foster parent association news and schedules; local training; features on foster families and community members working

for children; photos; and news articles and support all foster families can use.

Dear Southern Region Foster Parents,

Thank you! How easy it is to forget to say these two little words. Thank you....

- For the days you take off work to fulfill your role as foster parent.
- For the times we wake you in the middle of the night asking you to take a stranger into your home.
- For the times you spend beside a sick child's bed, nursing him back to health.
- For the many, many hours you spend molding young lives; teaching and loving the abused and neglected children.
- For sometimes sacrificing your own family life to serve others.
- For all the extra training you take, improving your skills.

For these and all the other things you do daily as FOSTER PARENTS, we are grateful.



Southern Region foster families annually enjoy the day at the Duquoin Fair.



Billboard on Hwy. 64 is a source of recruitment of foster/adoptive parents in the southern region.

Foster parents are a special breed of folks. They are cheerful, flexible, sensitive to others, patient, humorous, and have great endurance. You come to us with such excitement and dreams of making a difference in the lives of children and oh, you do!

Some of you are able to provide permanency to children through subsidized guardianship or adoption. Those of you who are able to do this know the tremendous satisfaction of providing this level of commitment to a child.

But, even if a child spends just a short time in your home, you have touched their lives in ways you will never know.

You touch our lives too. You make our jobs easier and you make our lives better just by knowing you.

For all of the staff in the Southern Region; bless you; thank you.

Sincerely,

Deborah Brewer, MSW
Foster Care Licensing Supervisor

Check out trainings and resources around Southern Region

Grandparents Raising Grandchildren - meets at Albion First United Methodist Church, 129 East Main, Albion, Illinois. Contact person: Loretta Bailey 1-800-635-8544. Meeting dates: The 3rd Wednesday of each month at 10 a.m.

Family Support Group - Contact Person: Bob Cook at 1-800-322-3722

Adoption & Subsidized Guardianship Support Group - meets at First Church of God, 2600 S. Banker, Effingham, IL. Contact person: Judy or Julie at 618-988-1330. Meeting dates: Third Tuesday of each month, 6:30 p.m. - 8:00 p.m. (Childcare is provided.)

Southern Illinois Child Passenger Safety Trainings

- * Moving Kids Safely (free) June 7 & 14 at Grayville Fire Department in Grayville, IL - will receive a free booster seat and car seat!
- * Standardized Child Passenger Safety Training (\$40) June 25 - 28 at Jefferson County Health Dept, #1 Doctor's Park Rd, Suite F, Mt. Vernon, IL

Southern Region Foster Parent Advisory Council - meets at the Mt. Vernon Convention Center and Visitor's Bureau, Mt. Vernon, IL. Contact persons: Carol AuBuchon at 618-876-8985 or Cindy McCleary at 618-393-2979. Meeting dates are:

- * July 16th, 10 a.m. - 2 p.m.
- * September 17th, 10 a.m. - 2 p.m.
- * November 19th, 10 a.m. - 2 p.m.

If siblings must be separated, foster parents can help with visits

Many talk shows today feature family reunions. Adults who were separated as young children have gone to great lengths to seek each other out. The reunions are teary, emotional scenes, as the adults recount childhood memories and the great lengths they have gone to in order reunite with their siblings.

The children in the foster care system frequently are separated from their siblings. They have been removed from their parents, their home, their school and now placed separately from their siblings. Many of these children were caretakers for their brothers and sisters and worry about who will take care of them. Others are separated for the first time in their life.

The sibling bond is the longest lasting bond. It is longer lasting than the parent/child or husband/wife relationship. Children are shaped by the interaction with their siblings who have been their companions and playmates. Many siblings who were from dysfunctional families learned to depend on each other to work through problems. When siblings are separated they experience both grief and depression.

While practice is to place siblings together when possible, children may be separated for a number of reasons. Some foster homes don't have enough room for a sibling group. Others have severe behavior problems that make multiple placements difficult.

If siblings must be separated, plans for get togethers should be made immediately. Foster parents can help by hosting sibling visitations in their home. A reimbursement is available to foster parents who host sibling visitations. Please discuss the visitation plan with your child's caseworker.

Southern Region Training

FosterPRIDE In-Service Training

All licensed foster parents and adoptive parents are welcome to attend any or all of the PRIDE In-Service Trainings to enhance their skills and meet yearly training requirements.

Module 1 - *The Foundation for Meeting the Developmental Needs of Children* (Four 3-hour sessions = 12 training hours)

Module 2 - *Using Discipline to Protect and Nurture* (Three 3-hour sessions = 9 training hours)

Module 3 - *Addressing Developmental Issues Related to Sexuality* (One 3-hour session = 3 training hours)

Module 4 - *Responding to the Signs and Symptoms of Sexual Abuse* (Two 3-hour sessions = 6 training hours)

Module 5 - *Supporting Relationships Between Children and Their Families* (Three 3-hour sessions = 9 training hours)

Module 6 - *Working as a Professional Team Member* (Three 3-hour sessions = 9 training hours)

Module 7 - *Promoting Children's Personal and Cultural Identity* (Two 3-hour sessions = 6 training hours)

Module 8 - *Promoting Permanency Outcomes* (Three 3-hour sessions = 9 training hours)

Module 9 - *Managing the Impact of Placement on Your Family* (Two 3-hour sessions = 6 training hours)

Module 10 - *Understanding the Effects of Chemical Dependency on Children & Families* (Five 3-hour sessions = 15 training hours)

East St. Louis
618-650-3213

Marion
618-536-7751

For the summer training schedule, please contact the number listed above.

Pre-registration is required for all classes!
Call the number listed for your area.

Module

SALEM - Salem Township Hospital
June 12 & 19 (Thurs) 6:30-9:30 p.m. 7

Other In-Service Trainings

Transcultural Parenting
ALTON - Holiday Inn
June 7, 14 & 21 (Sat) 9:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.

Educational Advocacy

Two 3-hour sessions = 6 training

It is mandatory for one foster parent in each family to attend Educational Advocacy Training in order to be re-licensed. Educational Advocacy Training is offered following each Foster PRIDE/Adopt PRIDE training and many additional times. This six hour course covers information foster parents need to know so that they can advocate for their foster children's educational rights and needs.

Marion
618-536-7751

CARBONDALE *Hampton Inn*
June 7 (Sat) 9:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m.

East St. Louis
618-650-3213

EDWARDSVILLE *Comfort Inn*
June 18 & 25 (Wed) 6:30-9:30 p.m.
WOOD RIVER *DCFS Office*
June 3 & 10 (Tues) 6:30-9:30 p.m.

Outdoor safety tips

Children especially enjoy playing outside with their favorite toys. Some of the favorite toys by age group are listed below with tips on how to keep the activities fun and safe.

Ages 1 and 2

Push and pull toys
Soft balls
Sandboxes
Baby pools

For safety:

Never leave your child alone in the pool or sandbox. Make sure none of the toys have small pieces they could choke on. Keep the child in a shaded area wearing sun screen.

Ages 3-5

Tricycles
Bikes with training wheels
Ride on toys

Make sure your child is well supervised. Set limits as to where they can ride their bikes. Helmets, knee and elbow pads, and wrist guards should be worn.

Ages 6-7

Roller skates
In-line skates
Bikes with training wheels

Remind your child that they are not allowed in the street.

Ages 8-11

Skateboards
Non-motorized scooters

Remind the child to wear light colored reflective clothing. Helmets and knee and elbow pads should be worn. A helmet should be worn flat atop the head.